



Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Betsi Cadwaladr
University Health Board

Welsh Language Services Annual Monitoring Report 2023-2024





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Executive Summary

This report addresses the statutory duty of Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (the Health Board) to provide an annual account to the Welsh Language Commissioner on compliance with the Welsh Language Standards (the Standards) over the reporting year.

The report reflects the requirements and content as stated within Standard 120 of the Standards:

- Complaints
- Workforce Planning
- Recruitment
- Language Skills
- Training to improve Welsh language skills

This report also gives an overview of progress including service developments and key achievements from April 2023 to March 2024.

This year has seen the Health Board recognised at a national level with two national awards, and a shortlisted nomination for the *NHS Wales Awards 2024*.

The first award was for *Best Promoter of Welsh in the Workplace* at this year's *Careers Wales Valued Partner Awards*, for our work in inspiring and motivating young people to make the most of their bilingual skills, whilst also informing them about employment opportunities within the health sector in north Wales.

The second was a special recognition award by the *National Centre for Learning Welsh*, for our strategic planning and innovative and progressive techniques to ensure Welsh learning opportunities for the workforce and the consequential effect on patients.

Our Language Choice Scheme has been shortlisted for the *NHS Wales Equitable Care Award* category in the *NHS Wales Awards 2024*. The scheme ensures that as an organisation, we are actively offering patients services in Welsh by identifying language choice.

The delivery of the Welsh Language Standards continues to be at the forefront of our planning. However, we are also fully committed to delivering the Welsh Government's *More than just words* Five-Year plan. Following an internal mapping exercise, it was pleasing to note that out of the 16 actions assigned to Health Boards, we are at a favourable level, with six actions achieved, and eight in progress. Further information is provided within the report and the work already achieved to progress these. We have also identified actions beyond the Health Boards' remit, as these are activities that we have adopted as part of our wider work programme.

As part of the *More than just words* agenda, the Health Board embraces the “Active Offer” principle, meaning the provision of a Welsh medium service without the service user having to request it, by continuing to embed the “Active Offer” in service delivery with the Language Choice Scheme, operational in our acute and community settings.

Additional priorities have been aligned with the main themes of *More than just words*, such as:

- embedding Welsh language planning in guidance and policy
- implementing a targeted Welsh language training and workforce strategy to support our current staff
- working in partnership to raise awareness of the importance and advantages of Welsh language skills when considering the health sector as a career, supporting the creation of a bilingual future Workforce

This report reflects additional policies that have been implemented to support delivery of the Standards at all levels within the Health Board. Operational support has been provided to services, with detailed highlight reports showcasing areas of compliance and achievements. The East Integrated Health Community has been proactive in adopting this approach, and demonstrable achievements are highlighted within this report.

Information detailed within this report expands on how we have significantly advanced our services during 2023-2024, setting the platform for further evolution over the next reporting year.

Background and Current Position

This report not only reflects the Health Board’s progress against the requirements noted in Standard 120, it also demonstrates how we design our services to address the needs of our population.

The Welsh Language Services of the Health Board

The Health Board’s Welsh Language Team has been structured to ensure its workstreams provide the necessary support to meet the linguistic needs of the population. It consists of four services that support the organisation to both deliver legislative requirements and to address our patients’ needs.

1. Legislative Compliance
Ensuring that we support the organisation to deliver its obligations under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.
2. Promotion and Engagement
In line with the operational elements of delivering the *More than just words*

Five-year plan, we actively support services and initiate projects and schemes that will increase understanding and awareness of our culture, and the impact on patient care and satisfaction.

3. Training Provision

Our Welsh Language Training Programme is tailored to address the requirements of various services, along with additional support provided by the *National Centre for Learning Welsh* with our Work Welsh agreement.

4. Translation Services

Our Translation Team ensures that the organisation is able to provide information to patients in their preferred language, and is also providing simultaneous translation to facilitate language preference in clinical and corporate settings.

Self-regulation and Governance

Overall Board Accountability

Our structural accountability has been maintained, with our Welsh Language Strategic Forum, chaired at Executive Director level, establishing our internal governance arrangements. The Terms of Reference steers our strategic approach, with membership consisting of senior and active leaders who are able to drive requirements forward. There is a scrutiny route for escalating any issues of significance, as well as annually reporting to the Board on compliance and achievements.

Welsh Language Services Risk Register

It is essential that the Health Board recognises possible areas of risk in relation to the Welsh language and a dedicated Risk Register is in operation. Current potential risks include meeting the demands of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, implementing the “Active Offer” principle in line with *More than just words*, and delivering the *Bilingual Skills Policy and Procedure*.

All risks have been reviewed during 2023-2024, with all three risk ratings currently at moderate or minor. In assessing our current position, no risks required escalation.

The Welsh Language Services Risk Register is monitored quarterly, and reported upon bi-annually to the Welsh Language Strategic Forum.

Internal Performance Assurance

In order to scrutinise the Health Board's own performance and the availability and standard of Welsh-medium services across the organisation, the Welsh Language Team continued to conduct quarterly quality assurance surveys during this reporting year.

Through a combination of 'secret shopper' surveys and site visits, BCUHB's Bilingual Services Monitoring Scheme measures the quality and availability of Welsh-medium services within hospitals and surgeries under the management of the Health Board. When these surveys were restarted following the COVID-19 pandemic, it became clear that standards had generally slipped during the previous year or two. As a result of this, the Welsh Language Team members set out to collaborate directly with relevant managers and administrators across North Wales during the summer of 2023, in order to identify weaknesses and put relevant actions in place to ensure improvements could be made. As a first step, a series of walkabouts were held at community hospitals throughout north Wales, to ensure that all temporary signage was displayed bilingually and in accordance with the requirements of the Standards. The success of these walkabouts, which were conducted alongside managerial / administrative staff, was clearly reflected in the results of the subsequent 'secret shopper' surveys that were held during 2023-24, as a marked improvement in the quality of signage was recorded at a number of our hospitals and sites. This demonstrates that internal performance reviews provide assurances that the Health Board is achieving compliance.

Welsh Language Standards

The Standards have now been in operation since the imposition date of 30 May 2019. Significant progress has been made within the Health Board, with the Welsh Language Standards Compliance Officer providing organisation-wide directive on implementing the Standards, as well as supporting and facilitating delivery at grass roots level.

During the last year, the Health Board has provided further investment to the Welsh Language Team, which enabled the appointment of a Welsh Language Standards Support Officer. This was a significant appointment as it has allowed the team to continue to develop tighter monitoring controls to scrutinise compliance with the Standards.

Support has been focused primarily on working with the three Integrated Health Communities (IHCs) across North Wales (East, West and Central) on completing a self-assessment questionnaire on their compliance with the Standards. East IHC completed this piece of work in January 2024, and the Welsh Language Standards Support Officer has since provided feedback on compiling actions plans to address any shortfalls.

A more detailed report on the results for East IHC East is included below.

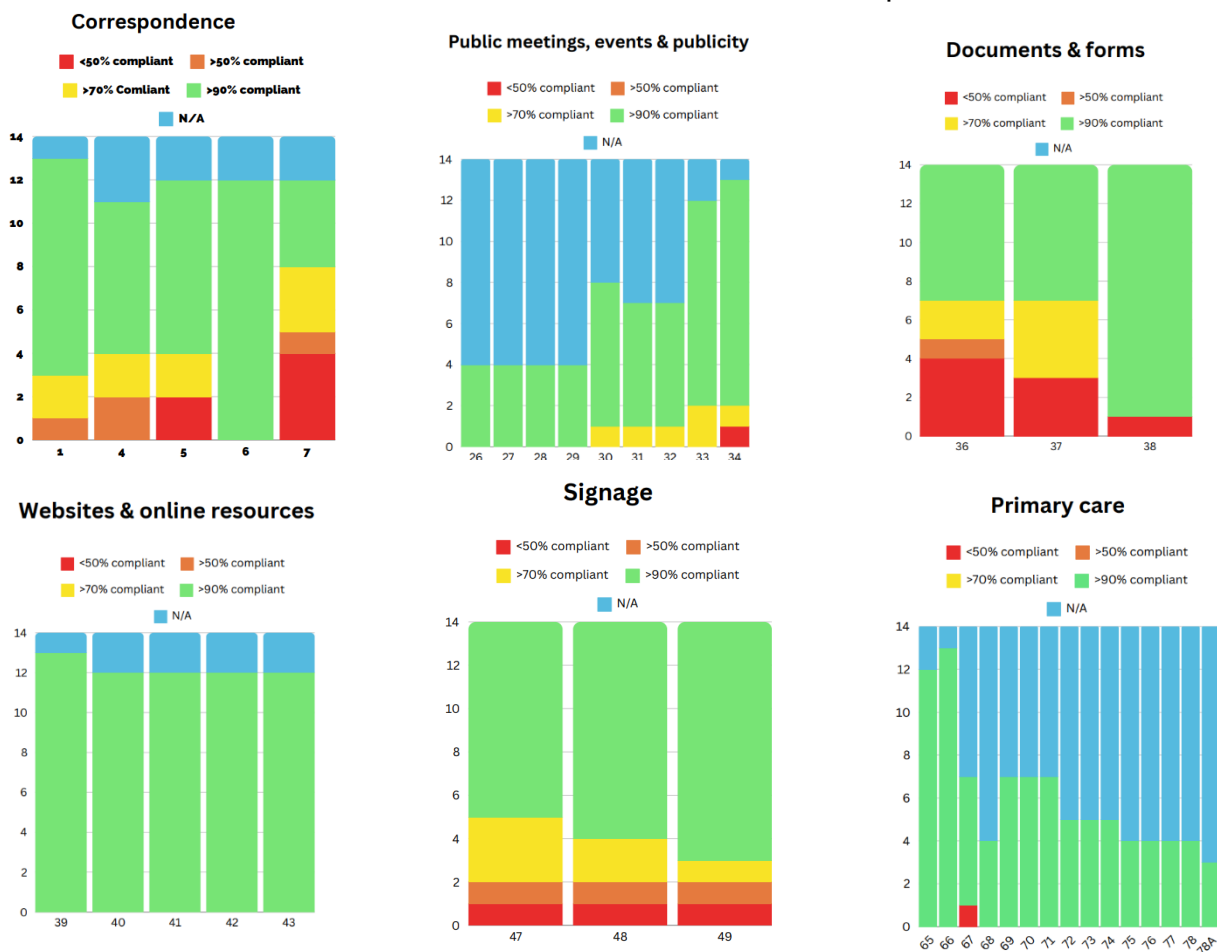
Welsh Language Standards Data Analysis

The evaluation exercise completed by East IHC allowed for a broader understanding of their compliance with the Standards. A self-assessment form was circulated for each department to complete to note their current compliance with each Standard as well as providing evidence to support their answers. This is a working document which every department will need to update annually.

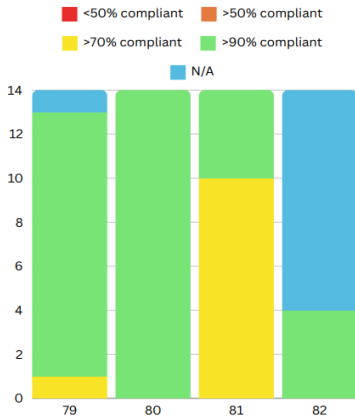
In reviewing the outcomes, a few running trends were identified. The areas that seemed to be most compliant were:

- Correspondence (Standards 1-7)
- public meetings, events and publicity (Standards 26-34)
- documents and forms (Standards 36-38)
- website and online resources (Standards 39-43)
- signage (Standards 47-49)
- primary care (Standards 65-68)
- use of Welsh language internally (Standards 79-82)
- record of Welsh language skills of staff, opportunities for training, Welsh language awareness and resource provision (Standards 96-105)
- workforce and recruitment planning (Standards 106-109)
- clinical consultations (Standard 110)
- record keeping (Standards 115-117)

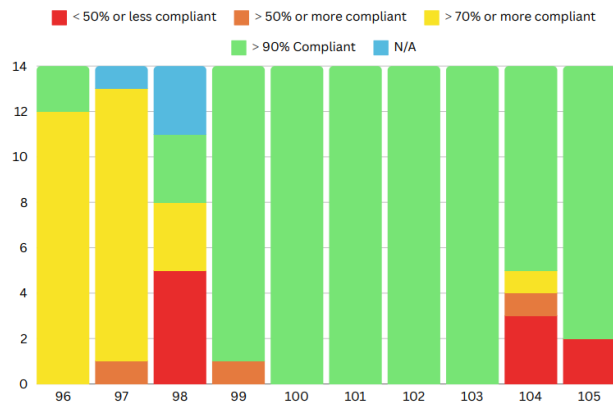
This is a significant proportion of the Standards, which is encouraging and demonstrates the impact of the work undertaken since the imposition date.



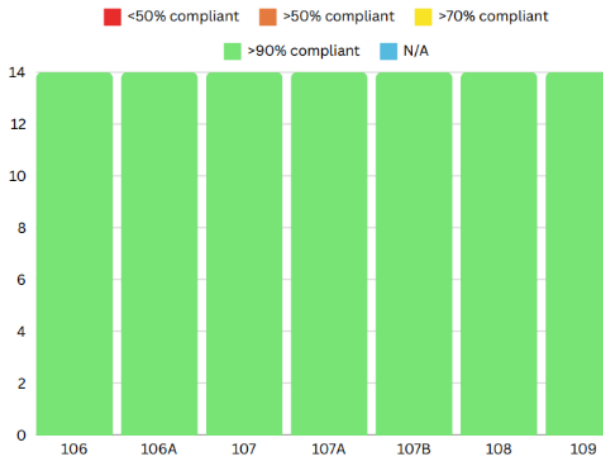
Use of Welsh internally



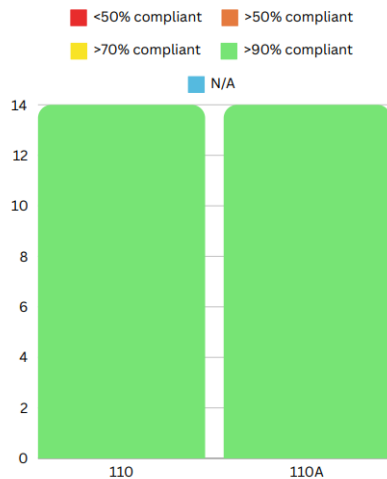
Staff Welsh language skills



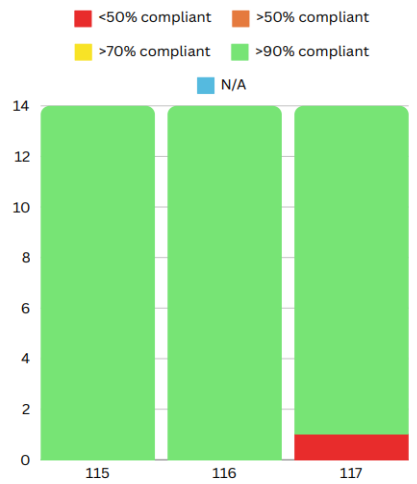
Workforce & recruitment planning



Clinical consultations



Record keeping

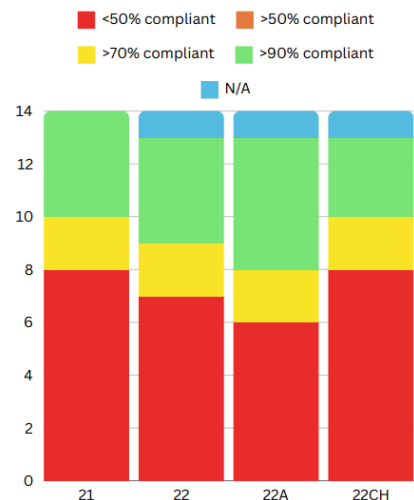


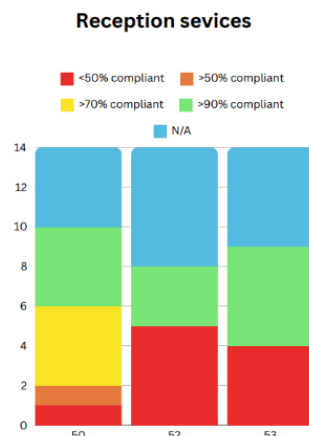
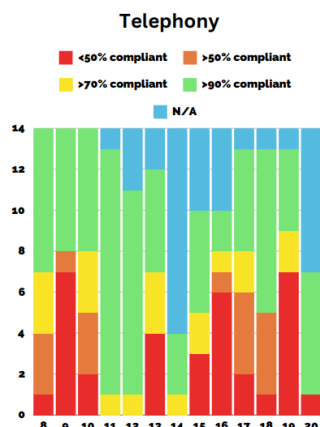
This activity also identified areas that required further support:

- Internal meetings (Standards 21-22)
- Telephony (Standards 8-20)
- Reception Services (Standards 50-53)

One of the running trends we saw as an area of non-compliance was internal meetings. As a result, the Welsh Language Team has developed a Standard Operating Procedure focusing on the protocol for internal meetings to use as guidance and a form of check list.

Internal meetings





Telephony and reception services were areas of mixed compliance. These areas continue to be a priority for the Team as they are first points of contact for many patients and their families. Our Bilingual Skills Policy and Procedure supports this work, as it identifies front line posts where the ability to speak Welsh is an essential criteria. If services have not been successful in appointing Welsh speakers, following a robust approval process, posts can be advertised with Welsh language skills as a desirable criteria, with the proviso that the successful candidate learns Welsh within the first 12 months of employment. A training programme has been put in place to support this.

Establishing a consistent approach to the delivery of the Standards

Work has also continued to provide advice and support to the organisation with various aspects of complying with the Standards, including developing bilingual Apps, instructional videos, and bilingual documentation. In order to provide a more consistent approach to the delivery of the Standards, the Team has focussed on creating Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) on specific Standards, to provide a more detailed guidance for staff to ensure full understanding and compliance. SOPs have been created for Standard 7 (a statement for welcoming correspondence in Welsh), and Standards 8, 9, 10 (Answering the Phone). An instructional video has also been created to aid staff further with regards to complying with Standards 8, 9 and 10. Further SOPs will be produced during the next reporting year, focusing on any shortfalls identified in the self-assessment questionnaires. All SOPs are approved by the Welsh Language Strategic Forum, and published on the Welsh Language BetsiNet site.

Impact of service developments on the Welsh language

Following the strengthening of the Equality Impact Assessment document and the wider Integrated Assessment Screening Tool last year, a Scrutiny Group was reconvened looking at Equality Impact Assessments for key policies and strategies. During the reporting year, the Welsh Language Team has contributed to the development of the Digital Strategy, to ensure that the Standards are embedded into any new digital developments.

A representative from the Welsh Language Team is a member of the Patient and Carer Experience group. The meetings are held monthly, for each of the three IHCs in the East, West and Central. It provides an opportunity to discuss any themes arising from complaints about non-compliance with the Welsh Language Standards. It is also a valuable opportunity to learn and provide input into various other developments across the Health Board.

Any complaints or comments received via various feedback mechanisms are utilised as opportunities to make positive changes to working practices, and to increase awareness on the positive impact of providing care to patients in their preferred language. Following a complaint to the Health Visiting Team in the West area (as detailed in the Complaints section at the end of the report), positive changes were made to the service, including a Welsh Language Awareness session arranged as part of the wider staff team meeting. The 'Cymraeg i Blant' initiative was also invited to the session, and gave an informative talk on their work, and how that intertwines with the important role of Health Visitors in conveying messages about bilingualism to parents.

The relationship with Primary Care has continued during the reporting year with awareness and information sharing sessions held with Primary Care Contracting Teams and at Practice Managers' meetings. The East Primary Care Contracting Team subsequently informed all Primary Care Contractors of the six Welsh Language Primary Care Duties that they are required to comply with. The impact of this work was favourable, with the team providing further assistance, resource and guidance directly to providers.

Welsh Language Awareness

In January 2023, a new Welsh Language Awareness e-learning package, created by the Health Board's Welsh Language Team was launched nationally on the Electronic Staff Record (ESR). This is part of the Mandatory Training Programme which is required to be completed by all staff, and repeated every three years. The figures below demonstrate that 87.14 per cent of the workforce have completed this training. This is above the 85 per cent target for any Mandatory Training within the Health Board and is an increase of nearly 20 per cent since last year. A Mandatory Training Day is planned for later on in the year to provide this training face to face for those with a low compliance rate, or those who have access issues.

Comp Matrix - Default

Division	Compliant	Non-Compliant	Compliance %
Health Community Centre (HCCX)	4330	789	84.59%
Health Community East (HCEX)	4372	778	84.89%
Health Community West (HCWX)	3706	430	89.60%
Integrated Clinical Delivery - Primary Care (ICDP)	441	22	95.25%
Integrated Clinical Delivery - Regional Care (ICDR)	1252	236	84.14%
Mental Health & LDS (MX00)	1941	166	92.12%
Midwifery and Womens Services (WXXX)	684	127	84.34%
Corporate Services	1825	189	90.62%
Total	18551	2737	87.14%

The “Active Offer” - Betsi at its Best!

Individual contribution to ensuring bilingual services at Community Hospitals

Through a combination of 'mystery shopper' inspections and site visits, BCUHB Monitoring Bilingual Services Scheme measures the standard and availability of Welsh-medium services within hospitals and GP surgeries managed by the Health Board. When these inspections recommenced following the COVID-19 pandemic, it became apparent that standards had elapsed in general over the past couple of years and subsequently, members of BCUHB Welsh Language Team began working collaboratively with relevant managers and administrators across North Wales during the summer of 2023, in order to identify weaknesses and implement relevant actions, in order to put improvements in place.

One of the managers who agreed to work closely with the Welsh Language Team in this respect was Maureen Roberts, Site Administrator, who is responsible for a number of community hospitals in the Central Area. As a first step, the focus was ensuring that temporary signs were in place and Maureen led on the process of updating and replacing these notices in Colwyn Bay, Denbigh, Ruthin Community Hospitals and Royal Alexandra Hospital, in Rhyl, so that they are displayed bilingually and in accordance with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards.

Following these initial changes, Maureen has been exceptionally proactive - and has worked independently of the Welsh Language Team - in order to ensure that all staff working on the four sites overseen by her are aware of the requirements in relation to displaying signage and providing bilingual services more generally.

At the same time, she has also been working diligently - on her own initiative - to monitor the standard and availability of Welsh-medium services at the locations in question, in order to ensure that standards do not lapse again. With respect to this, Maureen has kept in frequent contact with the Welsh Language Team and the translation unit over the past year, in order to ensure that relevant support is available to all staff at the four community hospitals, as required and that any issues which arise with respect to the Welsh language are able to be addressed quickly and efficiently.

In light of Maureen's tireless work - and her ability and willingness to encourage and motivate others - the standard and availability of Welsh-medium services in Conwy and Denbighshire community hospitals has increased to be better than pre-pandemic levels. This improvement has gone beyond signage alone, as our latest 'mystery shopper' inspections demonstrate that the availability and standard of bilingual reception and telephone services have also been greatly developed on the Health Board's sites in Colwyn Bay, Denbigh, Ruthin and Rhyl. This is down to Maureen's guidance, as - in addition to monitoring signage - she has also worked collaboratively with other members of staff, in order to put specific procedures in place to optimise the linguistic skills of the workforce and to facilitate the process of providing services bilingually. Undoubtedly her tireless work - and her infectious enthusiasm - has led to exceptionally positive developments with respect to the Welsh language within the hospitals she oversees and the outcome of this, ultimately, is to improve the standard of care provided to our patients.

Monitoring and encouraging improvements with respect to the Welsh language are not Maureen's only duties, by any means, and she is not able to speak much Welsh herself. But her efforts over the past year have proven that all Health Board staff are able to make a positive contribution to providing services bilingually (regardless of their roles and standard of Welsh). Indeed - as Maureen has already demonstrated - such efforts can lead to positive and profound changes overall, which are then cascaded through our workforce.

Welsh Language Training Programme

The Welsh Language Training Team has had another successful year of creating and delivering a variety of Welsh language courses to meet the needs of our staff. Whilst most of our teaching is virtual, it has been pleasing to be able to deliver some face to face sessions across North Wales this year with various groups of staff.

With the appointment of a new Welsh Language Tutor in September 2023, we have been able to maintain and answer to the demand of the increasing number of Welsh language learners.

Over the past year, the In-house Tutor has delivered:

- Standard courses open to all staff groups at various level, from Entry Level to Advanced
- Tailored sessions for specific services – for example, the Anaesthetic department at Ysbyty Gwynedd were eager to develop the Welsh language skills and capacity within the team, and provided a list of commonly used words and phrases. A course was delivered to the team so that they would be in a position to discuss anaesthetic procedures with patients.
- *Tystysgrif Sgiliau Iaith* - this is a recognised and accredited qualification by the *Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol* and the *Welsh Joint Education Committee* developed to enable applicants to acquire a certificate evidencing their Welsh language skills and ability to work through the medium of Welsh. It also aims to boost the ability to communicate confidently and professionally in Welsh, in written and verbal form in order to respond to the needs of the local population and service users.
- Learner of the Month / Dysgwr y Mis
- Learners Facebook page
- Nominations and participation at the Llŷn and Eifionydd National Eisteddfod



Joint working with the National Centre for Learning Welsh

The Welsh Language Training team renewed a twelve-month contract with the *National Centre for Learning Welsh* under the Welsh Government-funded *Work Welsh Scheme*. This ensured the continuation of opportunities and collaborative working as well as employing our Support Officer.

The scope of the agreement includes:

- Access to online courses at various levels
- Residential courses at Nant Gwrtheyrn
- A 'Fast-track' Welsh Language Learners' Course
- Cinio Clebran
- Mechanisms to support opportunities to use the language in informal sessions



Evaluation and Impact of courses

Evaluations are undertaken at the end of each cohort, seeking feedback on accessibility of courses, content, delivery approach and method. Findings from the evaluation stated that 94 per cent of learners were 'very happy' with the provision of learning and 100 per cent of the learners enjoyed attending the courses.

83 per cent of learners stated that they felt that they had made progress with their Welsh, and that they were more likely to use their new Welsh language skills with patients, colleagues and in the community. This is very encouraging as the ability to communicate in Welsh at any level brings comfort to our first language Welsh speaking service users.

A high percentage of learners who complete the courses enrol with the next advance course to continue with their development. This demonstrates course and delivery satisfaction, and the commitment of staff to develop their skills.

Dysgwr y Flwyddyn Award / Learner of the Year Award

A highlight for the Health Board was the Learner of the Year competition, with the ceremony being held on 7 March 2024.

Staff were invited to nominate their colleagues who had made an impression on them by learning Welsh to a high standard and using their new found skills to provide a better service to the Welsh speaking patients and service users of north Wales.

Following evaluation of the competition in 2022, it was decided that the nominations would be divided into two separate categories:

- Entry / Foundation Levels category
- Intermediate / Higher Levels

This ensured that all learners on every level had the opportunity to be included in the competition. Another welcomed additional category was “The Tutor’s Choice Award”, which was introduced to reward an outstanding learner who had made an impression on the tutors for their hard work and dedication to learning Welsh through the Health Board’s internal training programme.

There were forty nominations in total, with three judges, Teresa Owen, Health Board Executive Lead for the Welsh Language, Helen Prosser, Director of Teaching and Learning at the National Centre for Learning Welsh, and Manuela Niemetscheck, art psychotherapist and winner of BCUHB Welsh Learner of the Year 2022, whittling the high number down to a short list of three learners per category.

On the evening, we were joined by 80 guests led by our guest speaker, Aled Hughes, Radio Cymru, who addressed the audience in an inspiring and rousing manner. The event afforded the opportunity to strengthen partnership working ties with community groups, with numerous stalls on display including booksellers, Menter Iaith and Nant Gwrtheyrn.

All six short listed were interviewed and filmed prior to the ceremony and the winners were:

- Melanie Hayes – Entry / Foundation
- Leanne Parry – Intermediate / Higher
- Ian Day – Tutor’s Choice Award

All nominees who were short listed were awarded with many prizes generously given to us by our sponsors.

We were also joined by Radio Ysbyty Gwynedd for live coverage of the event. Both Wynne Roberts and Sarah Wynne Griffiths interviewed the winners and many of the attendees for a special feature, maximising the media attention for the event on social media beyond the learners’ Facebook page and BetsiNet.



Special Recognition for Welsh Language Training Team

This year, the *National Centre for Learning Welsh* held an event for the first time, 'Celebrating Learning Welsh', to recognise the successes of the sector and learners in particular and to celebrate and show the progress made towards achieving the Welsh Government's Strategy 'A million Welsh speakers: 2050'.

The Health Board was chosen amongst hundreds of employers linked to the *Work Welsh* scheme, as the winner of a special recognition award for our work.

It was won predominantly for our strategic planning and innovative and progressive techniques to ensure Welsh learning opportunities for the workforce and the consequential effect on patients.



Betsi's Welsh Learners' Case Study

I am a Consultant Clinical Psychologist and Head of Child Psychology in IHC West. I have worked for the NHS in North Wales for almost 19 years, initially starting as a Nursing Support Worker in Bryn y Neuadd, completing my Doctoral training with Bangor University and subsequently working in Learning Disability Services, CAMHS and Child Neurodevelopment.

I was raised on the outskirts of London, and did not know a great deal about this beautiful place until I met my now husband, who is from South Wales, at the University of London. I had the opportunity to get to know many places in South Wales, and I would visit his family in North Wales when I was able to do so. I immediately fell in love



with North Wales, and very quickly wanted to know how to pronounce all of the bilingual signs and to know about the meaning of those names.

I did a Welsh course for beginners in the evenings (Wlpan) with Bangor University and subsequently progressed to an intermediate (further) course. A few years ago, I was fortunate enough to have a week at Nant Gwrtheyrn through "Work Welsh" with some fantastic people, and this immersion was a great deal of help. I am so grateful for this grounding in understanding and speaking Welsh. Subsequently, I have been trying to use the Welsh I have constantly, beginning each conversation in Welsh. This meant putting the feelings of awkwardness and frustration that I had with myself for not being fluent to one side, and making the decision to use the Welsh that I have. This then became easier in the community from the outset, and afterwards I also felt more confident to use Welsh in work.

I love to read Welsh-language stories with my children. I am very proud to be able to switch between English and Welsh with them, and to help them to think about their homework, often in Welsh. I am very grateful to my Welsh-speaking colleagues who have supported and encouraged me over the years, and who have given their time for me to speak to them, slowly, without reverting to English. It is a privilege to be able to speak naturally with my children, people in the community, my colleagues and people accessing Children's Services, in Welsh or bilingually according to their requirements and language preference. This has opened the door to the lives, perspectives and ideas of others that I would perhaps otherwise have missed out on.

My favourite Welsh words include "bendigedig", "terfysg" and "pendramwnwgl"!

I would encourage anyone and everyone to learn Welsh and to take pride in using the Welsh that they have.

The Translation Service

The Translation Service provides translation support in the form of written translation and interpretation services for staff and service users in order to ensure that the Welsh language is treated no less favourably than English, in accordance with the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

The Team continues to provide support for all departments in the form of written translations and interpretation services and has seen an increase in demand for its services over the past year. Demand for translation services overall has continued to grow. This is regarded as a positive outcome as it demonstrates the Health Board's commitment to providing a bilingual service in line with its statutory requirements.

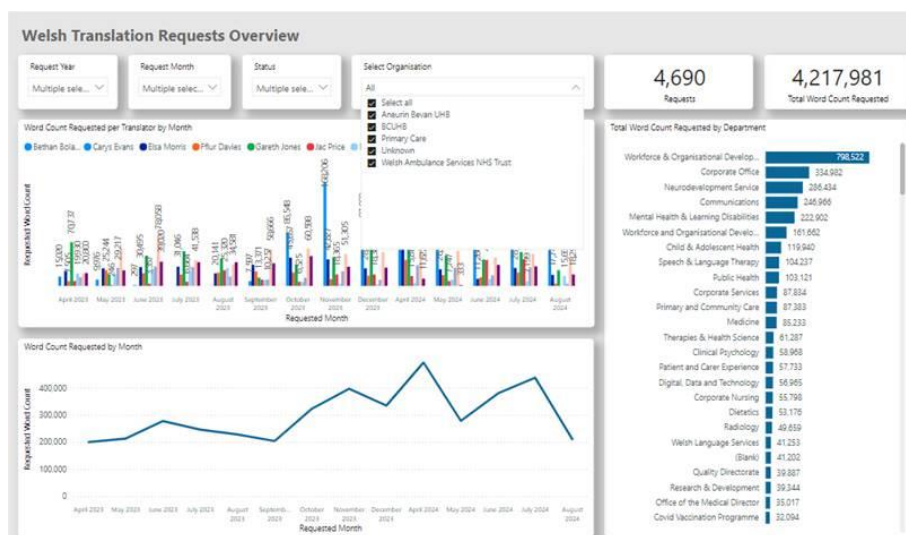
The Health board continues to adopt the approach of assessing documents for translation in line with Standard 37, applying this approach to the Board papers, with an increased number of papers now available bilingually.

Urgent requests for translations have also included press releases, patient letters, information leaflets and public health information for social media. An out of hours service is also available for urgent communications, and is a means to ensuring that bilingual information is issued in a timely manner.

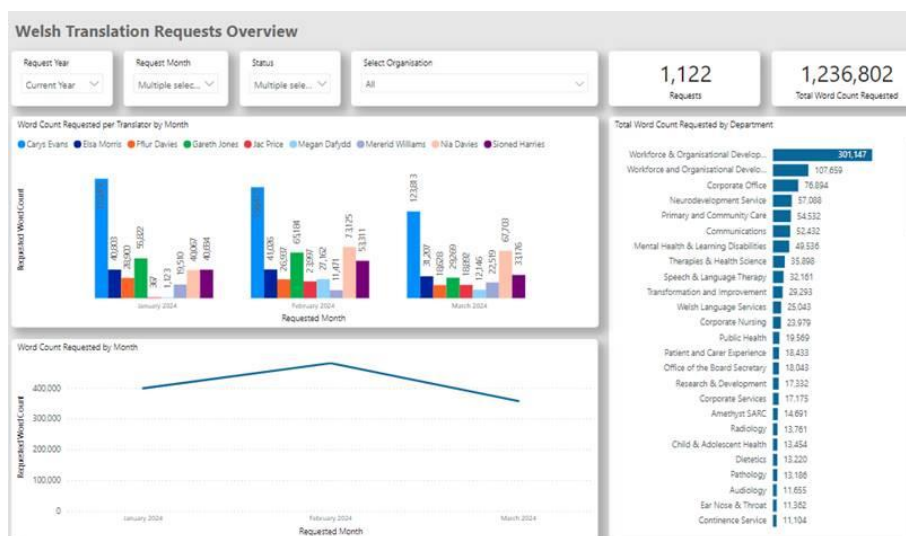
Overall number of words translated during the reporting year was 3,721,696, compared to 2,912,344 during 2022-2023. This is an increase of 28 per cent for 2023-2024.

The graph below demonstrates usage per service area, with Workforce and Organisational Development being the highest service demand, predominantly in request for the translation of job descriptions, in line with Standard 107 which requires all job descriptions to be available bilingually.

Service demand from 1 April 2023 to 31 December 2023



Service demand from 1 January 2024 to 31 March 2024



Demand for simultaneous translation has also increased, with the team supporting a wide variety of stakeholder events, forums, meetings and conferences. Support has also been provided at interviews for applicants who wish to have their interviews in Welsh.

The Translation Service entered into a Service Level Agreement with Aneurin Bevan University Health Board in February 2024, supporting the organisation in translating much of their public facing documents and correspondence.

Translation support continues to be provided to the primary care sector, both privately managed GP Practices, and independent contractors.

The Translation Service has an online Welsh Translation Portal, leading to improved accessibility in which service users are able to access the service via BetsiNet to upload their translation requests in a user-friendly manner. The Team has been working with the Informatics Department to explore potential enhancements to the current analytics function of the Portal for the purposes of obtaining more detailed statistical data regarding service usage. This has included the addition of work categories in which the team are able to record the nature of the request in question (press releases, job descriptions, information leaflets etc) to identify areas of greatest need and prioritise requests accordingly. The team has trialled use of this enhanced system and are working with the Informatics Team to implement it upon review.

The Team use a translation memory software in their daily work in which text fed into the system is captured and recorded into central terminology banks. This is a means of advancing performance and efficiency, leading to improved turnaround times and ensuring consistency of translations. The Team has been exploring the potential for employing machine-assisted translation, which is used increasingly within the field, as a means of further improving service efficiency and turnaround times. The Team is actively exploring training opportunities in this regard and intends to implement a pilot of this software with the view to further enhancing service provision.

Meetings are held regularly to discuss terminology and the Team is now actively working to ensure the development of comprehensive terminology lists, in order to ensure that the terminology used is appropriate for the target audience and consistent with that employed by others within the healthcare field.

Advantages of bilingual skills for the future workforce

Our partnership working approach has led to key achievements and successes over the past year. The Team has supported numerous jobs fairs and careers events. Investing in the workforce of the future is crucial if we are to nurture local bilingual talent, simultaneously increasing our capacity as an organisation to deliver services in Welsh. For a number of years, the Welsh Language Team has been proactive within this area, and this vision has now been shared within the objectives of the *More than just words* Five-Year plan.



Welsh Language Schools Roadshow culminating in national award

The Health Board's Welsh Language Team was named the *Best Promoter of Welsh in the Workplace* at this year's *Careers Wales Valued Partner Awards*.

The national awards were presented during a ceremony at Senedd Cymru in November 2023, which celebrated the efforts of employers from all over the country, who work in partnership with *Careers Wales* to help young people prepare for the world of work.



The Welsh Language Team was nominated for the work its members have done to inspire and motivate young people to make the most of their bilingual skills, whilst also informing them about employment opportunities within the health sector in North Wales.

After the Team contributed to a number of *Careers Wales*-arranged events at various schools across the north earlier this year, further collaborative work resulted in the organisation of a large-scale secondary school tour, which was specifically arranged to coincide with the Health Board's *Welsh Language Week 2023* in October.

Over a ten-day period, more than twenty sessions were held at thirteen different (Welsh and English-medium) secondary schools across north Wales.

The main purpose of these events was to inform pupils about the importance of Welsh-medium healthcare service provision and the advantages of bilingualism as an employability skill, more generally.

Alongside an initial presentation by a member of the Welsh Language Team, each of the sessions that were held as part of the recent tour also included contributions from members of the Public Health Team and short presentations by clinical staff (including physiotherapists, a dentist and a medical student), who discussed their own personal experiences of working bilingually within the Health Board.

Working Bilingually in the Health Sector: A Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board Guidebook for Young People

By working in partnership with members of the Health Board's Workforce and Organisational Development and partners from Bangor University's new North Wales Medical School, the Welsh Language Team has created a new booklet, which provides information to school pupils and young people about with the increasing number of opportunities that are available to work bilingually within the health sector.

The main purpose of the new resource is to inform young people about the various types of jobs that are available within the Health Board and about the benefits of bilingual skills for individuals who are considering careers within the sector in Wales.

The new booklet also includes case studies of two young members of staff who work bilingually in north Wales, in addition to positive experiences that our patients and their families have had as a direct result of receiving services through the medium of Welsh from the Health Board.

An event was held to officially launch the booklet at Ysgol y Creuddyn, in Penrhyn Bay, on 20 March, with short presentations on the importance of Welsh-medium healthcare services and the benefits of bilingualism. Opportunities were provided to Year 10 pupils to discuss their future plans with representatives from a number of the Health Board's key partners, including *Careers Wales*, the *Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol*, the *North Wales Medical School* and *Wrexham University*.

The booklet has now been shared with all secondary schools and further education colleges in north Wales.

Partnership working with Wrexham University

The Health Board collaborated with *Wrexham University* to hold an Interprofessional Education Day on "Care and Language Hand in Hand". This event was arranged by the University to promote bilingualism within the Health Care sector. First and second year students on a variety of courses including Occupational Therapy, Adult and Children Nursing and Paramedical Sciences attended the Education Day.

There were guest speakers during the morning, including the Welsh language Team, CAMHS “Ffrindiau “(Friends) Programme Co-ordinator, a Physiotherapist at Llandudno General Hospital the Director of Allied Health Professionals for IHC East. Patient related stories were discussed, showcasing how the “Active Offer” plays an instrumental role in patients’ care pathways.

During the afternoon, students attended Welsh taster lessons at all levels delivered by members of Health Board’s Welsh Language Team. A discussion panel was also held to afford students the opportunity to ask questions and discuss any areas of interest.

The feedback for the event was excellent, with a number of students testifying that they had a better understanding of why language is important to patients. We hope to maintain the relationship between ourselves and Wrexham University by taking part in similar interprofessional days in the future.

Celebrating our Culture

The Health Board takes every opportunity provided by national celebration days to highlight culture and awareness within the organisation. This year we celebrated St. David’s Day on all our acute sites, and to celebrate Santes Dwynwen Day, staff were given the opportunity to say why they loved working for the NHS.

Welsh Language Week

However, the Health Board takes this approach further annually, with its Welsh Language Week, held this year between 16 and 20 October. A wide variety of events were arranged to promote the importance of bilingual healthcare provision and celebrate the fantastic work that continues to be done by our staff, in order to ensure that Health Board services can be delivered through the medium of Welsh.

The week’s events included:

- The launch of BCUHB’s Welsh Language Learner of the Year 2024 competition
- Staff engagement BCUHB Welsh Language Team stalls at the three acute sites, Glan Clwyd (Friday), with advice and resources for staff
- A North Wales School Roadshow (in collaboration with Careers Wales and Public Health Wales)



- Story sessions by Cymraeg i Blant
- Childrens' Wards' visits by Mudiad Meithrin's DEWIN
- Interviews on Radio Ysbyty Gwynedd

National Eisteddfod

The Health Board's presence at this year's Llŷn and Eifionydd National Eisteddfod in Boduan, was led by the Engagement Team. It provided the opportunity to share information and health advice, by working with various partners and colleagues. It was an also an opportunity to engage with the public, and we conducted surveys to gain an insight into availability of Welsh medium services across North Wales.

The Training Team had nominated some of our learners for the Learner of the Year title and it was a great pleasure to see that Manuela Niemetscheck, Art Psychotherapist was amongst the top four nominees, along with Alison Roberts, Healthcare Assistant, who won the first prize in this competition. Many of our learners were very keen to come and support their colleagues during the ceremony, and a Betsi Learners' Trip was arranged to attend the ceremony.



The Welsh Language Team was also invited to participate at events held by other organisations, including a discussion panel with the Welsh Language Commissioner on how strategic planning led to innovative approach to service delivery within the Health Board in addition to a Welsh Government-led event focusing on *More than just words* and how we had implemented a training programme to support and increase our capacity to deliver services bilingually.

Key Performance Indicators

The data included below are in accordance with Standard 120 of the Welsh Language Standards under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

Workforce Planning

- **Number and percentage of the organisation's employees:**
 - **whose Welsh language skills have been assessed;**

Count of Employee Number	2021/22		2022/23		2023/24	
Individual Proficiency Level	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
0 – No Skills / Dim Sgiliau	8324	41.7%	9101	46.9%	9645	46.25%
1 – Entry/ Mynediad	2652	13.3%	2914	15%	2781	13.34%
2 – Foundation / Sylfaen	1298	6.5%	1410	7.3%	1371	6.57%
3 – Intermediate / Canolradd	1307	6.6%	1456	7.5%	1438	6.9%
4 – Higher / Uwch	1596	8%	1700	8.7%	1588	7.62%
5 – Proficiency / Hyfedredd	2573	12.0%	2829	14.6%	2743	13.15%
Total	17,750	89%	19,410	91%	19,566	93.8%
Total number of staff	19,955		21,326		20,852	

2023 / 2024 Data:

93.8 per cent of the entire workforce had recorded their Welsh language skills on ESR

2022 / 2023 Data:

91 per cent of the entire workforce had recorded their Welsh language skills on ESR

Training to Improve Welsh Language Skills

- **Number and percentage of the organisation's workforce that received training to improve their Welsh skills to a specific qualification level**

2023 / 2024 Data:

Number of the organisation's workforce that have accessed training to improve their Welsh skills to a specific qualification: 771*

This total equates to 3.6 per cent of the Health Board's current workforce

**Please note this figure is in addition to the number of staff who accessed training during the last reporting year, as per noted below*

2022 / 2023 Data:

Number of the organisation's workforce that have accessed training to improve their Welsh skills to a specific qualification: 1201 *

This total equates to 5.6 per cent of the Health Board's current workforce

**Please note this figure is in addition to the number of staff who accessed training during the last reporting year, as per noted below*

Recruitment

- **Number and percentage of new and vacant posts advertised with the requirement that:**

2023 / 2024 Data:

- Welsh language skills are essential - 298 (5.5 per cent)
- Welsh language skills are desirable - 5048 (93 per cent)
- Welsh language skills to be learnt - 66 (1.2 per cent)
- Welsh not a required skill - 14 (0.2 per cent)
- Total number of vacancies advertised - 5426

2022 / 2023 Data:

- Welsh language skills are essential - 474 (5.4 per cent)
- Welsh language skills are desirable - 8177 (93.4 per cent)
- Welsh language skills to be learnt - 80 (0.9 per cent)
- Welsh not a required skill - 16 (0.18 per cent)
- Total number of vacancies advertised - 8747

Complaints

- **Number of complaints received about the implementation of the Welsh Language Standards**

The Health Board received six new complaints in relation to compliance with the Welsh Language Standards during the reporting year, three via the Welsh Language

Commissioner, and three received directly by the Welsh Language Team or via the Complaints team.

All complaints were fully addressed under the Welsh Language Measure complaints timeframe or under the Putting Things Right Regulations.

One complaint was escalated to investigation status by the Welsh Language Commissioner, and related to a telephone query by a member of the public which was dealt with in English only. After providing evidence and remedial steps to deal with the matter, the investigation was closed.

The other two complaints via the Welsh Language Commissioner were dealt with fully after the initial letter, and were not escalated to investigation status. One complaint related to an English only service at one of the Health Board's reception desks. The second related to English only signage and reception service in another Department.

The first of the complaints sent directly to the Health Board was regarding errors on the Health Board's website. There were incorrect links as well as incorrect spelling and a 'Staff Zone' site which was not replicated on the Welsh site. These errors were corrected immediately.

Another complaint was from a member of the public sharing her experience of receiving an English only service from the Health Visiting team in the West. This led to positive discussions with the Service who went on to make changes to the way they identified patients' first language at initial contact. They also arranged a Welsh Language awareness session for their staff.

The last complaint related to errors made within the Speech and Language Service in which the targets set for a patient did not match what had been discussed and the targets differed between the Welsh and the English version. Also, the service the family had received in general had been mainly in English. The service was able to resolve the issues raised leading to a positive outcome.

Five other investigations from the previous reporting year were closed during this reporting year.

Reflection and Forward Vision

This report has demonstrated that progress has been implemented in:

- improving the quality of care that we provide through the language of choice
- increasing compliance with legal and statutory requirements
- identifying initiatives that have been implemented and rolled out to respond to language need as an integral element of care
- improving organisational development in terms of how we are able to support the workforce to be able to deliver services through the medium of Welsh

However, the Health Board is excited about the initiatives and opportunities in development for the next reporting year. Further site-based programmes are included within our annual work plan, in addition to extending our support to primary care colleagues. Our main objectives are focused in line with our vision to fully embrace the culture of our organisation, and increasing our capacity to deliver services bilingually.